

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Special Army Vehicle Workshop
(AZ 1) at Prelouc

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1. The special army vehicle workshop at Prelouc, Bohemia, known as AZ 1 (Automobilni Zbrojovka number 1), is controlled and operated solely by the Czechoslovak Army. It was formerly owned by a Czech, Korbel (fmu), who built the factory for manufacturing and repairing automobiles, but prior to World War II it was taken over by the Czech Army as a repair depot for its own vehicles and boats. The Army reorganized the workshop and made new adaptations as it acquired more modern vehicles. When the German army entered C.R., the workshop at Prelouc was considered a valuable objective and special machinery was brought in to enable it to make repairs on German vehicles, especially tanks. During the war, thousands of vehicles were repaired at Prelouc, thus saving the time and expense of transporting them to Germany for needed repairs. At present the workshop is able to repair any type of vehicle and can do such special work as repairing dynamos, etc. The factory is extremely well equipped, and the machinery is as modern as any in Europe.
2. The workshop is situated on the eastern edge of the small town of Prelouc, Bohemia, between the Labe river and the Prelouc-Pardubice highway. The main line of the Prague-Brno railway divides the workshop in two parts. The workshop itself is only about 250 meters from the Prelouc railway station. The workshop could be easily located from the air by following the river Labe or the main Prague-Brno rail line.
3. Approximately 70 officers and warrant officers and 1,000 civilians are employed at AZ 1. Since 1945, there have been no major changes in personnel, and even after the February 1948 coup the majority of officers and civilian foremen remained at their posts, although they were required to sign a membership card in the Communist party. Leading personnel are:
 - a. C. : Colonel Ing. Hlavacek (fmu), passive Communist.
 - b. Deputy C.O.: Colonel Ing. Ladislav Prochaska, Communist, also in charge of workrooms. His deputy in the workrooms is Captain Josef Gruitzner.

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- 25X1 c. Mobilization Officer: Major Drda (fmu), Communist.
 d. Post Officer: 1st Capt. Jindrich Lejhane, active Communist. Party
 speaker at public meetings
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- 25X1 e. C.O. of Auxiliary Company: Capt. Miricka (fmu).
 f. O. in C. of Warehouse: Major Josef Zerzan.
 Deputy O. in C.: 1st Capt. Jan Smid, Communist
 g. O. in C. of Tank Repair Shops: Major (mu), Communist.
 h. O. in C. of the Railway Yards: Lt. Pochop, non-Communist

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4. Civilians are employed by AZ 1 as foremen, skilled workers, and workers 3rd class. The majority of them come from near-by villages and use bicycles and motorcycles to come to work. Pay ranges from 2500-3000 kcs for an average worker to 4700 kcs for a foreman. The factory committee is a very powerful factor in the factory, and in certain phases its authority exceeds that of the C.O.

5. Work done by the Prelouc workshop can be broken down into two main categories: (1) repair of army vehicles sent in by various units; (2) repair of vehicles salvaged after the retreat of the German Army. Repair of Czech army vehicles has been divided by the MNO (Czech War Department) into three degrees of repair, only third degree repairs being handled by AZ 1. (The Czech third degree repair corresponds roughly to the American fourth and fifth echelon maintenance work.)

a. Category 1: Army Vehicle Repair. In order for an army unit to have a vehicle repaired by AZ 1 an application must be made by the C.O. of the unit directly to the MNO, department 7/II. Upon approval by the MNO, the interested C.O. then contacts the C.O. of AZ 1 and sets a date for the vehicle to be sent to the factory. This procedure generally takes about four weeks. AZ 1 is at present capable of handling any type of vehicle in the Czech Army. During 1947 the tank section of AZ 1 was enlarged and is now able to service any Czech or foreign tanks which are presently in use in the Czech Army, including the fitting of guns in the turrets. English, Russian, US, and German tanks have already been repaired here. (These tanks were given to the Czechs after World War II or were salvaged from battlefields.)

b. Category 2: Vehicle Salvage. AZ 1 has about 5000 cars, motorcycles, trucks, half-tracks, and tanks of German make, all partly damaged, parked in a big yard and in an open field nearby. It is the second task of AZ 1 to repair as many of these vehicles as possible and hand them over to the MNO for distribution to various army units. Some of these vehicles are also repaired for use of civilians. Special care is given to the German half-tracks called "Sleppry" (German "Schlepper") which were used to pull heavy artillery. An armored workshop takes care of fitting guns into repaired tanks. These guns are not new but are simply taken out of other damaged tanks. The firing ranges where these guns are tested are located at Milovice, Bohemia, and Libava, Moravia. These tanks are never returned after they leave for the firing range, for if any corrections are necessary the various army tank units have their own experts to make them. There is no special testing ground for tanks in CSR.

6. AZ 1 is the only special army vehicle workshop in Bohemia and Moravia, although there is another workshop of the same type in Trencin (P49/T58), Slovakia, known as AZ 2. It is well known that both AZ 1 for Bohemia and Moravia and AZ 2 for

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Slovakia are not able to cover the needs of the Czech Army. AZ 1 has a small branch at Kershartice (P50/N18), Bohemia, but its output is very small. To correct the present situation it is known that the MNO wants to build a number of workshops such as AZ 1 and AZ 2.

7. Worker morale at AZ 1 is very low, and much of the work, especially the salvaging of war vehicles, is done in a slipshod and haphazard manner. A large number of the employees try to make more money by stealing car parts which they sell outside for private use. Many of the leading officials and even a few of the workers have illegally obtained a car from the workshop and have had it repaired free by the mechanics employed there.

Key to Sketch of AZ 1

1. Main building.
 - a. Offices.
 - b. Workshops.
 2. Painting workshops.
 - c. Stores of painting workshops.
 3. Wooden hut for washing the motors, etc.
 4. Stores (building has an arrangement for loading and unloading railroad cars; this equipment can even handle tanks).
 5. Gasoline station (gasoline and naphtha underground).
 6. Guard house and boiler house, which has big chimney 35 to 40 meters high on which water tank is installed.
 7. Kitchen and officers mess (capacity 100-150 persons).
 8. Barracks of "Auxiliary Company".
 9. Garages of Hg and or "Auxiliary Company".
 10. Wooden hut for material and damaged vehicles.
 11. Wooden building for storage of old tires.
 12. Wooden hut for old vehicles, tanks, etc.
 13. Stores of various objects and reserve machinery.
 14. Workshop for repairs of tanks.
 15. Special space for loading tanks onto railroad cars.
 16. Wooden hut for scrap material.
 17. Stores for bearings, etc.
 18. Same.
 19. Same.
 20. Stores for batteries, etc.
 21. Frame building for storage of cars and of tank parts.
 22. Emergency water tank for use in case of fire.
 23. Wooden hut for repaired vehicles.
 24. Camouflaged concrete building for storage of tank parts.
 25. Camouflaged concrete building for storage of tires.
 26. Camouflaged concrete building for storage of motor parts.
 27. Carpenter workshops.
 28. School for apprentices.
 - e. Mess.
 - f. School workshops.
 29. Workers mess; infirmary.
 30. Stores of car and tank parts.
 31. Garages and stores.
 32. Private garages of military personnel.
 33. Spare reserved for taking motor boats to the river for testing.
 34. Gates into AZ 1.
- Spaces marked M.A.T. are parking areas for damaged vehicles.
- I. Tesla Factory, which manufactures civilian radios.
- II. Tesla stores.

Attachment: 1 sketch of AZ 1, with key above.

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